

ASTON VILLA



NEWS AND RECORD

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY
MAGAZINE PRICE 20p



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SATURDAY 30th DECEMBER 1978—KICK-OFF: 3.00pm
FOOTBALL LEAGUE—DIVISION ONE
**ASTON VILLA v
BOLTON
WANDERERS**

20 QUESTIONS

Test your knowledge of events in soccer during 1978.
Answers to the questions can be found on Club Scene page.



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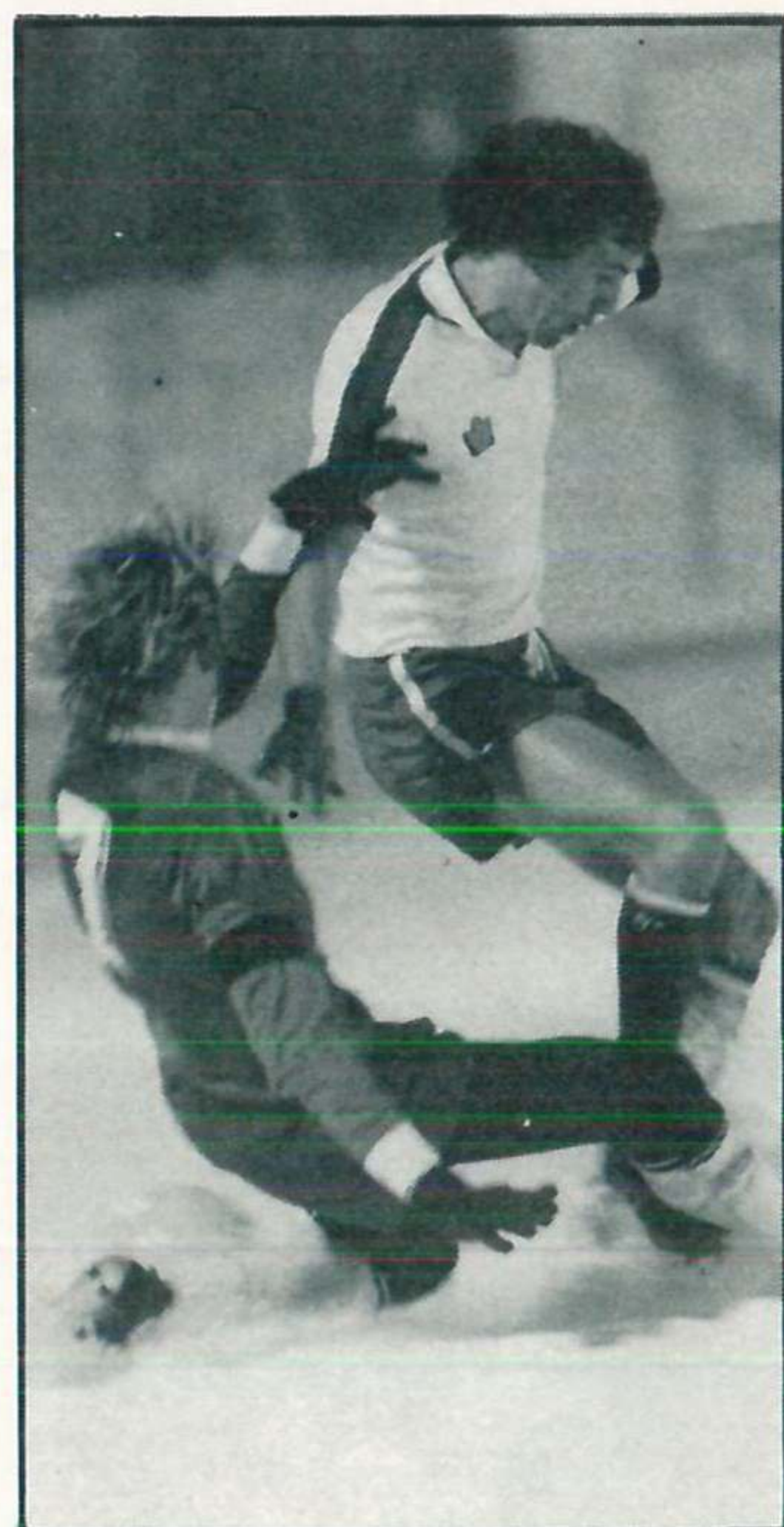
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Today's cover picture:
Gary Shelton

ONE

(see picture below)

Give venue, teams and result of this match.



TWO

Who scored Villa's final goal in the 1977-78 UEFA Cup competition?

THREE

Of the current First Division players, who has scored most League goals in his career?

FOUR

Who scored most League goals in the four divisions last season? Clue: He used to play for Birmingham City.

FIVE

Name the three clubs which applied successfully for re-election to the Fourth Division last season.

SIX

(see picture next column)
Where was this match played this season?



SEVEN

What was the result of last season's FA Youth Cup Final?

EIGHT

Which club scored most League goals last season—Liverpool, Spurs, Watford or Swansea?

NINE

Who was the leading goal-scorer in the 1978 World Cup Finals?

TEN

Who scored the 1,000th goal in World Cup Finals?

ELEVEN

(see picture below)

Where was this picture taken? Clue: It was warm and sunny!



TWELVE

For which League club is Bob Wilson registered this season?

THIRTEEN

Who was Second Division "Manager of the Year" for 1977-78?

FOURTEEN

Alan Simonsen is the current European "Footballer of the Year." For which club does he play?

FIFTEEN

Which non-League club made most progress in last season's FA Cup?

SIXTEEN

(see picture below)

What was the significance of this picture?



SEVENTEEN

Which club won the Welsh Cup in 1977-78?

EIGHTEEN

Who scored England's goal against Scotland at Hampden Park last season?

NINETEEN

Against which country did Andy Gray score on his return to the Scotland team this season?

TWENTY

Who was top goal-scorer for Villa's Central League side last season?



RON SAUNDERS

Owing to the Christmas Holidays, we are unable to have an up-to-date column by Ron Saunders. Instead, the first-team squad would like to wish you all a . . .

VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR



Finally, the task of re-building went to Jimmy Armfield. His side succeeded Villa as Third Division Champions in 1973, and from that promising base, Bolton developed solid continuity in their management. When Mr Armfield went to Leeds in October, 1974, Ian Greaves was promoted from assistant. He then appointed George Mulhall as his No. 2 for the climb to the Second Division title last

BOLTON WANDERERS

At the moment, their mission at Burnden Park is to lift the team away from the group hovering just above the relegation zone. They are quietly confident of achieving

The adjustment to a higher standard has created some worries, but when things were looking decidedly grim at the end of November, Ian Greaves was prepared to be considerate. He accepted that a shortage of cover for the senior squad was the main reason for a run of eight games which yielded

Those two points could go down as the turning point by the time Bolton reach the end of the season. But the real importance is that the improvement came on cue with the termination of the worst injuries. As Mr Greaves commented in the *Manchester Evening News*: "Stan Anderson comes in at the start of the season for us. We've had so many injuries that we haven't had the chance to get a settled side, and we are really only starting now"

TEN YEAR RECORD AT A GLANCE

[illegible]

The strain was felt mainly in the defence. In 20 matches, a clean sheet was returned on only one occasion and many of the defeats were emphatic. For instance, after starting the away programme with a draw at Southampton, Bolton lost the next seven away games and conceded 21 goals while failing against Albion (0-4), Arsenal (0-1), Liverpool (0-3), Chelsea (3-4), Spurs (0-2), Bristol City (1-4) and Birmingham (0-3). The most shattering result was at Chelsea, where Bolton relinquished a three-goal lead late in the second half.

In ten games at home, results were



PETER REID

in midfield during a two season 'apprenticeship' in first-team football.

The full back combination now seems settled on two players of considerable experience. Peter Nicholson, a bargain signing from Blackpool in 1971, has been a versatile member of the squad since Wanderers' time in the Third Division, while Tony Dunne is in his sixth season at Burnden Park after playing 415 League games in 13 years with Manchester United. He collected a European Cup-winners medal in 1968.

In emergency, Bolton have used midfield men Roy Greaves and Brian Smith in the back division and they also gave League debuts on the same day in September to a pair of teenage full backs, David Burke, from Winsford, and Mike Graham, from Lancaster.

Farnworth-born Greaves, who has

been awarded a Testimonial in recognition of just over 450 League outings for Bolton, is still a valued member of the normal midfield pool. Smith, a Mancunian who had a loan spell with Bradford City last season, also had an extended run in midfield, but lost the place when Mr Greaves paid a club record £250,000 for the signature of Neil McNab, the Scottish Under-21 cap from Tottenham.

The regular midfield trio is completed by the young Merseysider, Peter Reid. He captained the England Under-21 side last season, but missed the first couple of months this term because of injury. This meant a change of duty for Neil Whatmore, who dropped back from the striker's role which brought him 21 League and Cup goals in the promotion season.

Whatmore has been unable to regain a place in the attack, where

Bolton have possibly the most experienced front three in the country. Willie Morgan made his First Division debut for Burnley as an 18-year-old in 1963, and then had a successful time with Manchester United before returning to Burnley and later finding his way to Bolton on a free transfer three seasons ago.

Frank Worthington, a member of Ian Greaves' promotion team at Huddersfield, rejoined his former boss at Bolton in a £90,000 move from Leicester last season and Alan Gowling, also at Huddersfield with



BOLTON WANDERERS 1978-79 . . .

Front Row (left to right) . . . Ray Train (now Watford), Neil Whatmore, Roy Greaves, Peter Reid, John Ritson, Tony Dunne.

Middle Row . . . Ian Greaves (manager), Terry Poole, Sam Allardyce, Jim McDonagh, Frank Worthington, George Mulhall (now Bradford City manager), Jim Hedrige (physiotherapist).

Back Row . . . Peter Nicholson, Alan Gowling, Mike Walsh, Paul Jones.



WILLIE MORGAN



MIKE WALSH



FRANK WORTHINGTON

quite favourable, with just three defeats against Bristol City, Albion and Nottingham Forest. Wins were achieved against Derby, Norwich, Leeds and Wolves and they finished all square with Birmingham, Manchester City and Coventry.

During the defensive disruption, former Rotherham goalkeeper Jim McDonagh retained an ever-present record, but no fewer than nine players were used in the back four. Paul Jones, a member of the full England squad only two years ago, and Black Country-born Sam Allardyce played only the first match as the centre backs and didn't link up again until November! Both players suffered from injuries, Allardyce was also put out by suspension, and Jones had a spell at right back.

Jones finally returned to the No. 5 shirt in mid-November, but by then, the highly-rated Mike Walsh had established his claim on the other centre back position. The Manchester-born youngster has also proved himself at left back and

Mr Greaves, was signed from Newcastle for £120,000 last March. Between them, Bolton's strike force can boast more than 1,300 League appearances and over 300 goals. Worthington was the First Division's leading marksman with 14 League and Cup goals by December 16th and at the same stage Gowling had chipped in with nine.

When the time comes for an introduction of youth in the attack, Bolton will be hoping for big things from former West Bromwich Schools player Chris Thompson. The England Youth international has been called on as a substitute this season.

In fact, Bolton's youngsters must have every opportunity now that the squad has been reduced by the transfer of two experienced reserves. Striker Garry Jones went to Blackpool and ex-Walsall midfielder man Ray Train moved on to Watford. The two deals brought in the better part of £100,000 towards the fee paid for McNab.

PEOPLE



EVE RANDALL, Secretary to Alan Bennett, is in the spotlight today in our series on the people who work behind the scenes at Villa Park.

★ ★ ★

If you don't like the routine or ordinary office work and if you don't mind long hours, including the occasional evening and Saturdays, then you are qualified for a job in football!

This is exactly what prompted Eve Randall to make a 'phone call asking if there was a secretarial vacancy at Villa Park in October 1976. "I 'phoned on spec and didn't know a job was being advertised in the programme," she says. "It was just a coincidence that I called at the right time. I had always wanted to work in a line like this. Previously, I had been secretary to the General Manager at the Strathallan Hotel for two-and-a-half years. That was different - not just general office work but involving so many other interesting people.

"After that, I went to a transport firm and found that work monotonous. So I decided to try for a job in football. In fact, it was the second time I had applied to one of the local clubs. Just after leaving school, I wrote to Birmingham City, but I never did work there."

Eve was born in Northfield and has always lived in that part of the city. She attended Blessed Humphrey Middlemore School and then had a year's secretarial course at Hall Green Technical College. "I was never sure what I wanted to do while I was at school," she says. "I think I went round the world every day! But the only subject I really liked was PE.

"I enjoyed playing Hockey in particular. We won several tournaments at school and I have one or two medals to remind me of my time as a goal-scoring inside right! Mind you, the game could be a bit brutal at times. I remember we played the boys once. They had never played before but had watched us and had an idea about the game. They had a harder shot, but by the end they were limping off the field!"

Eve enjoys watching most sports and during the summer she likes playing tennis. As far as football was concerned, she admits to breaking the family's tradition of following Villa. "I was a Manchester United supporter and used to come down here when they were playing. The only full season I watched was in 1971-72 when I saw most of Birmingham City's home games in their promotion season. I must have brought them luck, but really I only went there because my boy friend was a Blues supporter.

Nowadays, of course, Villa's results are the only ones that matter. In Eve's first season at Villa Park, we carried off the League Cup and she recalls how busy the office was when she started the job in the midst of the run towards Wembley.

"I soon realised what a hectic job this can be" she says. "In that first season, we had so many games that I hardly knew whether we were coming or going. We were so involved and doing practically everything to help out. I wondered what I had let myself in for - everyone likes to be busy but it seemed chaotic.

"In the normal routine, we have a wide variety of jobs. We make the travel arrangements for the team - booking hotels, meals and coaches - and we deal with player's contracts and so on. We also have quite a lot of contact with the box holders and in the summer we renew the leases for the boxes. Although these come up every three years, we have only one free year out of three because the Trinity Road and North Stand boxes are not leased at the same time.

"Although the Ticket Office looks after the sale of seats, we all have to know how to work the computer because if they're pushed, we go down and help out. This applies particularly in the summer when the renewals are coming in. Another part of the job is dealing with a vast amount of correspondence. We don't handle requests for autographs in our office, but we still have to reply to a lot of letters. We get a few complaints and occasionally we get a nice letter as well. But life is never dull!"

ASTON VILLA TRAVELLERS CLUB



LIVERPOOL v ASTON VILLA

Monday 1st January 1979 • Fare: £2.50

Coaches depart from the Serpentine Car Park at 11.30am.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST v ASTON VILLA

F.A. Cup Third Round

Saturday 6th January 1979 • Fare: £1.60

Coaches depart from the Serpentine Car Park at 12 noon.

Seats can be booked during normal opening hours (9.30am to 4.45pm) at the Pools Office or by postal applications (enclose membership card, correct money and a stamped self-addressed envelope).

For further information, please telephone: 021-328 2246.

The Travellers Club Office will be closed on January 1st.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING LIST OF NEW FIXTURES...

Tuesday, 2nd January, 1979

Southern Junior Floodlit Cup Round Two (Replay)

Aston Villa v Hereford United

At Villa Park (7.00pm)

Saturday, 6th January, 1979

Central League

Aston Villa v Manchester United

At Villa Park (2.00pm)

Monday, 8th January, 1979

FA Youth Cup Round Three

Leicester City v Aston Villa

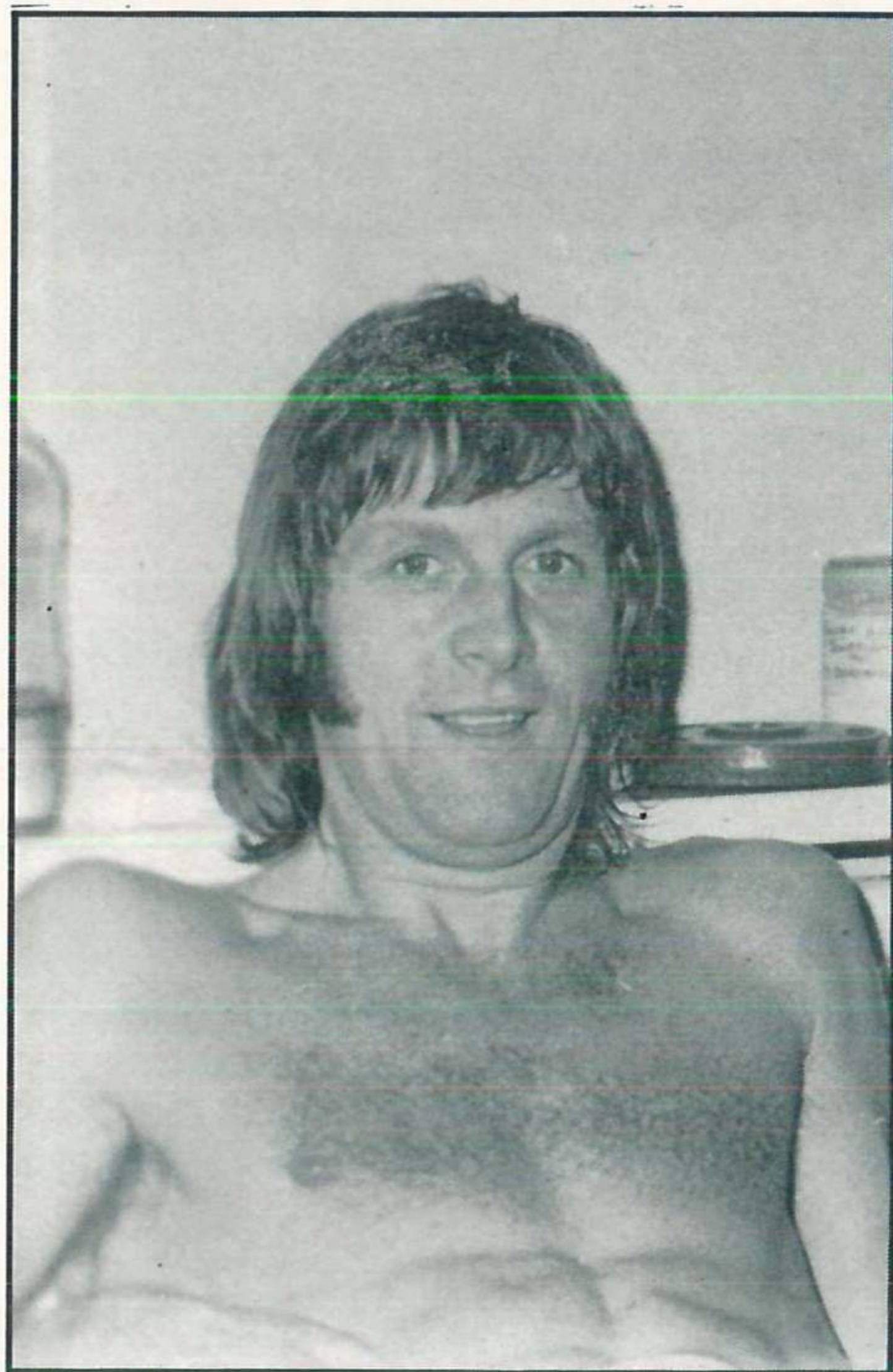
At Filbert Street (7.30pm)

If a replay is necessary, it will be played at Villa Park on Monday, 15th January, 1979 (7.00pm).

NATION WIDE

After taking only seven points from 17 games, Millwall raised hopes of another relegation escape by chalking up successive wins against Cardiff City and Bristol Rovers. One man didn't make all the difference—but manager **George Petchey** agrees that the introduction of **Mel Blyth** (pictured below) was a big help.

Blyth, a Wembley winner with Southampton only two-and-a-half years ago, thought he had said farewell to English soccer when he bought out his contract with Southampton and went to play in South Africa. But when he returned to London recently, he went to Millwall, where he joined in the training and turned out in the practice matches. Even then, he looked destined for a lower grade of football and he joined Southern League club Margate.



Mr Petchey, who was coach at Crystal Palace when Blyth was playing at the same club, took up the story from there in the *London Evening News*. He explained: "I didn't think of asking him to sign—I thought he was looking for another club. But when he decided against staying with Margate and came back to train with us, I said: 'Hey! What about signing and having a game or two?'" And that's how the 30-year-old defender came to help in Millwall's much-improved run of form.

Norwich City launched an appeal to the public of Norfolk in the hope of raising £500,000 towards the cost of a stand that would cost around £1 million. An artist's impression of the proposed building was very similar in appearance to the North Stand at Villa Park—but including just one level of 20 boxes which would be offered for rental at £5,000 per season.

Norwich's appeal for people to take up £100 building bonds was given heavy publicity with full-page advertising in newspapers and an eight-page colour brochure which was given to all supporters at a recent home match. "I think this is the first time a football club has spent money to attract money," said Commercial Manager Mac Mackay.

Queen's Park Rangers are prepared to break their club record transfer of £250,000 for a new striker, but there is now a hope that Irishman **Billy Hamilton** could provide the solution to their poor scoring record. He went on as substitute a fortnight ago and hit both goals in Rangers' first victory for ten games.

Hamilton, 21, and married just before winning his first Irish cap in May, was signed from Linfield for £25,000 but agreed to the move only when Rangers said they would find a college for him to continue his studies as a school-teacher. Rangers paid an additional fee to Linfield for his international appearance against Scotland and another sum is scheduled after 12 first-team outings.

Derek Hales, who averaged a goal-a-game in the 16 fixtures before his big-money transfer from Charlton to Derby two years ago, has not made the happiest of returns with the South London club. Hales (pictured left) has been out of action for three months because of a groin injury and is not expected to be available again until the middle of next month. Manager **Andy Nelson** reckons the absence of Hales is the reason for Charlton's disappointing home form. He says: "Derek would make all the difference. He is fearless and can sort out defences."



He is 6' 2" tall and has been working on making his height count in challenging for the ball in the air. Rangers' coach **John Collins** commented: "He scored a lot of goals back home, but found training here very difficult at first. He has only recently started to come through."

The football-supporting public of Nottingham is not doing enough to back the efforts of the local clubs. That was the call from the respective Chairmen . . . **Mr Stuart Dryden**, of Forest, and **Mr Jack Dunnett**, of County.

Forest are disappointed that a Championship-winning side challenging for further success in Europe cannot attract regular attendances of 30,000 or more. Mr Dryden warned fans that unless there is an improvement, the lukewarm support could jeopardise plans for a new £1½ million stand.

Meanwhile, Mr Dunnett told County followers that the Board would give financial support to the club's promotion bid only if the public showed their intentions. Despite County's good form in the Second Division, gates are running at an average of less than 10,000 per match.

Teenager **Steve Gattin** has made the most of his first-team chance for Arsenal. And it seems that he could be emulating his brother, Middlesex batsman **Mike**, in carving out a career at a top level in sport. Manager **Terry Neill** said: "He is a classic case of a manager not knowing what a player can do until he has played in the first-team. He looked good from the off and has shown remarkable composure."

Another youngster, **Steve Walford**, has also had plenty of opportunity in covering for Arsenal's injuries. He has played at full back, centre half, and in midfield—a valuable contribution from a player who cost only £20,000 when Mr Neill bought him from his former club, Spurs.

NEWS IN BRIEF . . .

Carlisle United are to stage a memorial match for the family of **Hugh Neil**, their chief scout who was killed in a motoring accident. A new £75,000 sports arena will also be named after Hugh, who played for the club in the Sixties.

Graham Cross, the 35-year-old former Leicester City defender, has been given a free transfer by Preston. Cross played in a Third Division promotion side for the last two seasons—helping Brighton in 1977 and Preston last year.

Maidstone goalkeeper **Dickie Guy** is a man for Cup shocks. You may remember him as the hero of Wimbledon's great run four years ago when they beat Burnley and lost only in a replay against Leeds. Guy was involved in another upset when helping Maidstone k.o. Exeter City this month.

Micky Droy, the Chelsea skipper and centre half, hopes to be back on first-team duty for the FA Cup-tie at Old Trafford next week. Droy dropped out of the side because of illness in August and has now recovered from an operation.

Alershot set a new club record when beating Barkng in the FA Cup. It was their 14th unbeaten game in succession, beating the old record of 12 games in 1970. But manager **Tommy McAnearney** said: "Records don't matter much—it's how many points you pick up on the day"

Roger Davies is anxious to justify the £170,000 fee which Leicester City paid to bring him back home after his spell in Belgium with FC Bruges. Davies (pictured right) has failed to re-produce his former scoring form—but thinks he has found the answer after an operation to cure a slipped disc. For months, the pain in his back and hips baffled the medical advisers, but Davies is now in the Leicester side again. He says: "Because of the injury I was rarely able to play my best but now it is behind me, I should be able to start showing what I can really do"



SIXTIES

The new regime couldn't have made a better start to the task of avoiding relegation in 1968. For the first time since the war, Villa took maximum points from three games in the Christmas period—and climbed three places off the bottom of the table. Boxing Day was a memorable occasion when a crowd of 41,250 came to Villa Park for the visit of Cardiff City and the debut of Brian Tiler, who was immediately appointed skipper following his transfer from Rotherham United. The Programme Editor's report of a 2-0 victory went as follows: "Atrocious conditions, with the pitch worsening as the afternoon frost took hold, did not prevent the 'Doc's Demons' from putting on a show that delighted the largest Second Division crowd of the season, and Villa's biggest gate (apart from the local 'derby' game against Birmingham City) for many and many a day. Chasing every ball with a work-rate that was incredible, Cardiff were not allowed a look-in and they succumbed to two of the finest goals that could be wished for. Barrie Hole slammed a great shot that went in like a rocket, whilst Brian Tiler met a 'Fergy' corner kick with great precision to put the game beyond doubt." Villa then went to Carlisle for the last fixture of the year and won with a single goal from Willie Anderson. The Programme said: "Although the outcome could not be regarded as any classic, it was a triumph for the new-born confidence and sheer professionalism of our players." Writing in the *Villa News* for the first time, Tommy Docherty said: "Aston Villa's new administration and the challenge we all face provides opportunity for players, administrators, directors, and for our fans to walk together towards a mutual aim . . . to make Aston Villa the first name in football again."

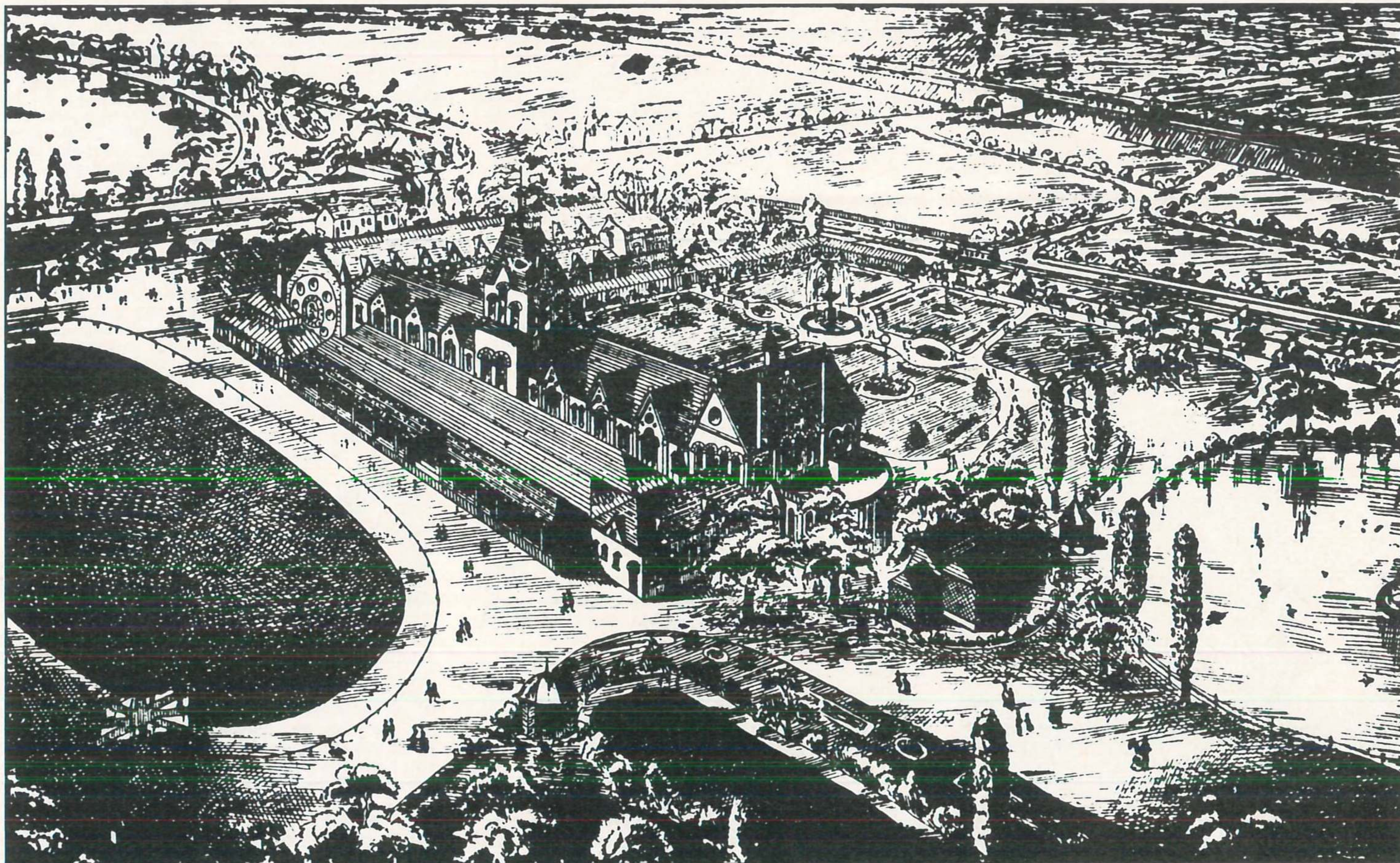
FIFTIES

Christmas 1957, brought a welcome 'present' for Villa supporters. The Programme announcement said simple: "Gerry Hitchens, the Cardiff City centre-forward, was transferred to Aston Villa on Friday 20th December, and he led our attack against Birmingham City the following day. He stands 5ft 11ins and weighing 12st should add punch and weight to our forward line, for he is both clever and a good goal-getter." A crowd of 40,000 saw the first appearance by a player who was to become one of the Club's most popular strikers of the post-war period. Unfortunately, his debut coincided with a Birmingham victory, achieved with goals from Eddy Brown and Noel Kinsey. But Hitchens made his mark on Boxing Day when forcing an own goal and scoring the third himself in a 3-0 victory over Arsenal before 41,000 spectators at Villa Park. On the same day, one of Hitchens' predecessors in the number nine shirt, Derek 'Doc' Pace, was transferred to Sheffield United and started his new career with one of the 'Blades' four goals against Blackburn Rovers. The Programme Editor commented: "Derek, who came to Villa Park when quite a youth, gave eight years' valuable service to Aston Villa and we feel sure he will give of his best to his new club." Hitchens added to his reputation by signing off 1957 with both goals in Villa's 2-1 win against Everton at Goodison Park. Jimmy Harris, later to lead Birmingham's attack, pulled a goal back for the Merseysiders and we needed a great last-minute save by Nigel Sims to hold on to the points.

FORTIES

Villa's form was definitely inconsistent while playing three games in four days during Christmas 1949. There were no Christmas Eve celebrations on the return journey from a 3-0 defeat at Fulham, but Boxing Day brought a much better performance—a 3-2 victory at Molineux which removed Wolves' unbeaten home record for the season. Villa made the early running and the Programme Editor recorded the scoring as follows: "When Ivor Powell headed a free-kick by Leslie Smith past Williams, it was no more than they deserved. In the 40th minute, Swinbourne nicely equalised with a header from a Mullen centre, but hardly had the cheers died down than George Edwards had put Villa in front again. "Wolves pressed following half-time and in the 60th minute Smyth beat Wakeman to again put his side on level terms. With just over 15 minutes play left, Ford gathered a Dorsett ball in the middle of the pitch, brushed past Pritchard, and as Williams advanced to meet him, our Welsh international gently put the ball in the back of the net." Twenty-four hours later the boot was firmly on the other foot when Wolves galloped home by 4-1 in front of the biggest crowd of the season at Villa Park. Swinbourne scored twice to give them a convincing lead soon after half-time and despite a Villa goal from Dixon, Wolves went on to win comfortably with further goals from Smyth and Pye.

...AND THEN CA



Journalists from dozens of countries made a base at Villa Park during the World Cup Finals of 1966.

We often wonder if they ever discovered the history of the building which was used as the Press Centre, complete with Telex machines pumping out stories in various languages and also a TV studio for after-the-match interviews with players and managers from Argentina, Spain and West Germany.

In Victorian times, this part of Villa park was a home for wild animals—lions, bears, etc—in the Menagerie which was a focal point of a visit to an entertainment centre known as Aston Lower Grounds.

Nowadays, part of this area is occupied by our Ticket Office, while the top-floor accommodation serves as the Club Offices. But it's hard to imagine the setting of the building when the Lower Grounds had a ballroom, a skating rink, a theatre, a winter garden, a sports field, beautifully laid-out gardens and an ornamental pool.

A century ago, the present Board Room overlooked the pool, which is basically the site of the playing area. From one side of the offices, you would have seen the gardens—now the site of the Car Park to the rear of the North Stand—and from the other side, you could have observed the sports field where a Lacrosse match was staged in 1883 between teams of Indians and Canadians.

The development of the Lower Grounds was costly—and a failure. It was an extravagant exercise on the site of Aston Hall's former vegetable garden and after a few years, the operation went bankrupt. Its story is included in a film tracing the history of Aston Manor. It is researched and

directed by Dr Jennifer Tann, a reader in economic history at the University of Aston, and has been available for hire to schools and colleges, etc, this year.

The prints of the Lower Grounds—which we were able to publish today—were taken from slides used by club photographer Terry Weir in the photographic show which he takes around the Lions Club branches.

Dr Tann's knowledge of Aston—and Birmingham as a whole—is second to none. Villa Park, it seems, was just a small part of a walled deer park in which Sir Thomas Holte built Aston Hall between 1618 and 1635. It remained in the Holte family until 1818 then occupied by James Watt Jr until his death in 1848.

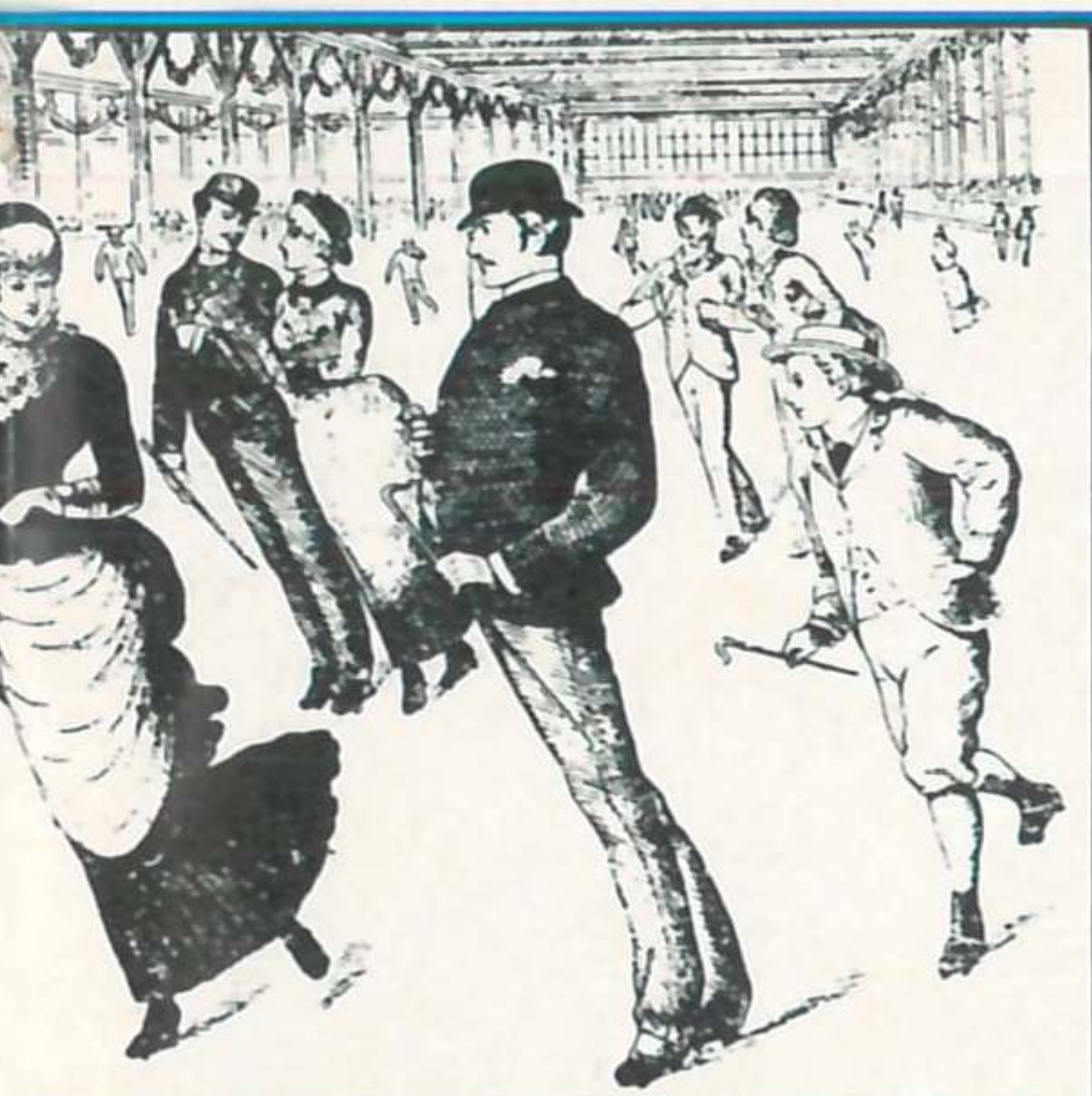
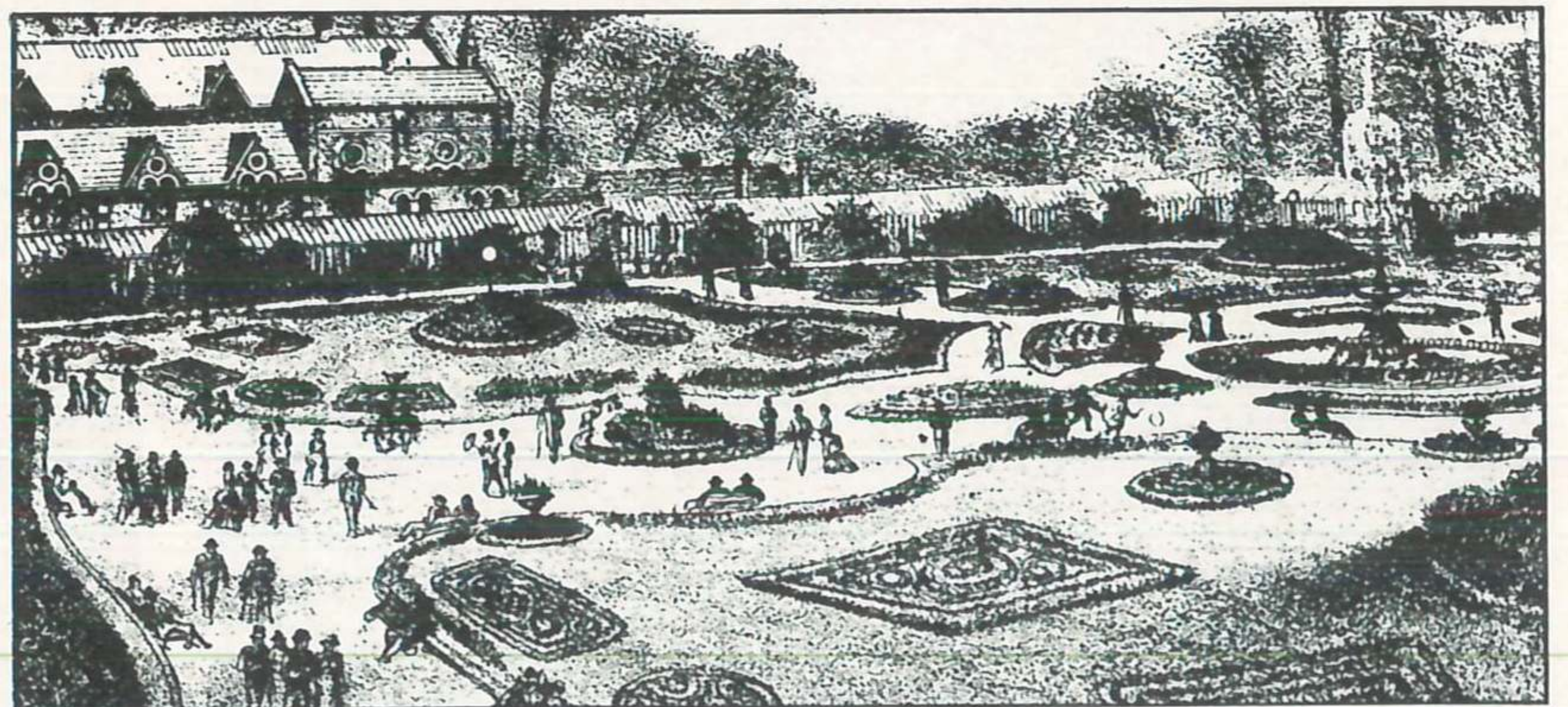
Three years later, plots of land were sold off for development—including the site of Ansell's Brewery—and large areas were used for residential development. Aston Hall itself was opened to the public by Queen Victoria in 1858 and it was around that time when the Lower Grounds opened as an entertainments centre.

Early in the 20th Century Aston became a Borough but was swallowed into Birmingham just before the First World War. In its time, Aston provided very desirable homes for the skilled workers from the city of a thousand and one trades.

Today, however, the bulldozer is slowly winning in its race to rub out more than a century of history. But Aston Hall remains to compete on the skyline with the concrete ribbon of the Aston Expressway—and we trust that Villa Park is only in its infancy after 81 years as the home of Aston Villa FC.



ME VILLA PARK!



★ Top left . . . A general view of the Lower Grounds in Victorian times.

★ Above left: The end of the main building stands today and is used as the Club Offices.

★ Top right: The Menagerie which was situated roughly behind our Ticket Office. The area still exists . . . see picture above.

★ Right: The ornamental gardens. This is now the site of the Car Park behind the North Stand . . . see picture bottom right.



THE VOLUNTEERS

For every first-team match at Villa Park, a group of up to 35 people provides a vital service . . . and totally without payment. They are the unsung heroes of the St. John Ambulance Brigade—a body of dedicated volunteers who don't even claim their travelling expenses.

It's at this time of the year, when everyone likes to be out and about enjoying themselves, that we should all pay proper tribute to their work. Today's match is their second duty of the Christmas week at Villa Park and in a full season they reckon to treat between 300 and 500 casualties on the ground.

Their squad of approximately 30 to 35 people for every match is drawn from the West Midlands area which, in effect, means Birmingham and Sutton Coldfield. "They come from all walks of life," says Area Staff Officer Alfred Egginton, who has been in charge of the Villa Park operation for 15 years. "We have a Commissionaire from Fort Dunlop, one or two schoolteachers, and State Registered Nurses from Good Hope Hospital. A lot of them provide medical attention at the big factories in Birmingham. In fact, I was in charge of the *GEC Division*, where we man the works medical centre every evening from 5pm to 10pm."

The Brigade is run entirely on voluntary donations, including a collection at Villa Park once a year when supporters have a rare opportunity of saying their thanks to the people who have helped hundreds of Villa fans over the years. Members of the Brigade have to buy their own uniform at a cost of between £50 and £60 and they give up several hours of their free time each week.

"We have many other regular duties apart from football," says Mr Egginton. "In the summer, we attend events at the Alexander Stadium and the Speedway at Perry Barr. Recently, we were on duty at the *RAC Rally* and we also go into Cinemas and Wrestling Halls."

Mr Egginton, a member of the Brigade since 1939, outlined the cases which his staff treat at Villa Park. "We see just about everything—from people feeling sick to fainting, fractures, heart attacks, and even expectant mothers. We always have a State Registered Nurse on duty and at the very big matches we normally have a doctor as well. Villa's Medical Officer, Dr Targett, is a member of the Brigade, but, of course, he is concerned with the players—although he has offered to help if we are in difficulty. Occasionally, we assist injured players and should they need to go to hospital, we take them in our own ambulance."

When a member of the public requires hospital attention, the ambulance is on immediate call to take them to the hospital which is allocated for the day. Normally, they would go to Birmingham General Hospital, but sometimes they are taken to Good Hope Hospital in Sutton Coldfield. If it is known that a person is receiving hospital treatment for a particular condition, they would be taken to the hospital that knows their case history.

• Would you be interested in joining the Brigade? If so, you are invited to contact any member on duty at Villa Park or you can write to: **St. John Ambulance Brigade, 100 Lionel Street, Birmingham 3.**



Picture captions . . . top to bottom:

The St. John Ambulance 'team' at Villa Park.

The senior officers at our games, Divisional Superintendent Frank Leach, Divisional Superintendent Jack Billington and Area Staff Officer Alfred Egginton.

Nurses treating a common problem—a patient with a piece of grit in his eye.

A spectator being taken on a stretcher to the Ambulance Room which is situated inside the gangway in the Witton Lane Stand.

H COVENTRY CITY



KEITH ORR

Alex Crompton talked to me on the day after the club's Christmas party last week. He didn't miss the significance of the date. "I was thinking last night," he said. "Twelve months ago I was at the same party on crutches."

Then he allowed his memory to dwell on the longest year of his football career. He recalled times of near-despair when a broken left leg was slow to heal . . . the magical day when an operation was cancelled because the surgeon discovered the bones were knitting by nature . . . and the hard slog which led him to a re-appearance in the first team, exactly 12 months to the day of his injury.

His substitute outing against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge lasted for only eight minutes, but it spelled out the message that Alex Crompton is back in business—and becoming impatient. "It was great to be back at Chelsea," he said. "But it wasn't long enough to prove anything. I'm confident about my general fitness, although I accept that I have to bide my time before getting a full game."

Alex could be excused if he felt bitter about his misfortune in collecting a fracture at each end of his three professional clubs. Yet he remains objective of his assessment of the injuries. "I suppose I have been a bit unlucky to have had three breaks," he says. "But it happened. It was bad luck. And that's it. Perhaps there were one or two days when I thought I didn't deserve to be laid up again, especially when it seemed as if I would be having an operation."

"But at least I've been lucky in suffering no reaction when starting to play again. When I broke my right ankle with Hibernian, I had an operation to insert a screw. This is still in the ankle, but I've had no bother from it. I was out from February to the next season and everything was OK after a good rest."

"With Arsenal, the fracture was in the fibula of my left leg—a very similar injury, I believe, to the one that Birmingham City's Keith Bertschin has had this season. He's probably had one or two additional problems, but this is a non-weight-bearing bone

and it took me barely two months to get back. I've had no bother since."

"Last year's injury was in the same leg, but higher up and this time I broke the tibia and fibula. If you had to choose between one or the other, you'd always prefer it to be the fibula. The weight is carried by the tibia and it takes much longer to recover from this fracture."

Alex was prepared for a long lay-off as he rested at home a year ago, but he did not expect to be in plaster for six months. "By then," he says, "everybody was wondering why it was taking so long—the manager especially. I saw the surgeon regularly and eventually he decided to have me in hospital—at the same as Tommy Craig went in for his knee operation."

At that stage, Alex was expecting to have an operation—and a painful one, involving a plate and a graft from the hip bone. It was something he accepted because if the leg wouldn't heal on its own, he was prepared to try anything that would help him back into an Aston Villa shirt.

So you can imagine his delight when the surgeon removed the plaster and found that the leg had improved dramatically since the previous examination. "He tried to move the bones—and couldn't," says Alex. "He took an X-ray and kept me in overnight. The next morning he tried the bones again and the news was still good. The leg had healed by nature—and just in time."

Instead of a visit to the operating theatre, he was sent home with just a small plaster covering the area of the break.

Alex started his fitness build-up almost immediately. "The first problem was trying to bend my left knee which was locked solid," he says. "The ankle was exactly the same. I reckon they needed lubricating with a spot of oil! The thigh muscle also took time to develop, then it was progress from walking to running."

There was no time for holidays, just a couple of days back in Scotland. After all, football is my job and I knew I had to work hard through the summer.

"Luckily, I had no real pain, even when I started running again. Yet I was talking to Keith Leonard, who broke the same bone, and he said he had so much pain that he was almost in tears as he ran around Bodmoor Heath."

Just the simple involvement with light training was a relief after the dreary winter months. "The boredom was the worst thing," explains Alex. "I would sit on the settee feeling miserable every day. Then I'd go up to the training ground and feel even more miserable, watching the lads running around and enjoying themselves."

"I read a few books and watched just about everything on television. I certainly didn't need the *TV Times* to tell me what would be on! Fortunately, I was able to watch most of the home matches from a box in the North Stand. When I was on Crutches, this was the only place I could be comfortable—there was no way I could have sat in an ordinary seat in the stand."

In Alex's recollections of that period, the attitude of the Villa supporters has a special place in his affections. That was why he rang into Tony Butler's phone-in on *BRMB* one Friday night. "I knew he

had a good audience and this was the only way I could thank all the fans for the cards and letters."

"They were fantastic—the best I've known in football. Some of the cards were real tear-jerkers—from 12-year-old boys and girls right through to old-age pensioners. The players were great as well. In fact, I felt embarrassed and obliged to them after all their running about for me."

Now Alex has only one wish, and that is to make 1979 a Very Happy New Year for himself and the club. There are no doubts in his mind. "When the time came for my first match in the Reserves, I

was just keen to get out, and wanted to do well. I wanted to get that over and done with, but from then on, I've gone from strength to strength. I'm satisfied with my general fitness, but I have been working on my sharpness in sprinting exercises. There's been a big difference just in the last two or three weeks."

"It was a new experience to captain the reserve side, but I won't be disappointed if I'm not skipper of the first team! I just want to win back a place in the side. I've enjoyed



playing with the Reserves, but at the same time, it can become a bit demoralising as you wait for a chance in the first-team."

Alex understands the need for patience—although that doesn't make it any easier to find—

and he recognises that when all the injuries are cleared up, there will be tremendous competition for places in midfield.

"But you must be positive," he says. "If you think you're not good enough to get in, then why try in the first place?"

Mike Beddow



SHOP WITH VILLA IN THE NEW YEAR...



Prices are constantly subject to revision due to rising costs, materials and Customs & Excise Duties (VAT) wherever applicable.

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Bar Scarf Embroidered 'Aston Villa' in Away Colours.....	£2.55
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Claret and Blue Bobs.....	£1.30
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Boys—Claret with Blue Crest.....	85p
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PENS	
Blue with Claret Motif and Aston Villa print.....	20p
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Sew-On patches.....	20p & 50p
Official Embroidered Badge.....	55p
Blazer Badge.....	£1.25
(Gold Wire).....	£2.95
Flag—39" x 30".....	£1.95
LAPEL BADGES	
Metal Lapel Badges.....	50p
Official Enamelled Badge.....	55p
Official Stick Pin Badge.....	40p
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Stainless Steel Pendants.....	95p
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Glass Ash Trays with Official Motif.....	£1.00
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V Neck Sweaters embroidered 'Aston Villa' in Claret—22" to 46" (Please state size).....	£5.95
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Villa Dog.....	£1.45
Villa Teddy Bear 15".....	£2.35
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White Sholder Bag (Special Price) printed Aston Villa.....	£2.00
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Autographed Posters.....	35p
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(with Metal Badge).....	45p
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Villa Players Paint Book.....	50p
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Shirts (Home and Away)—Size 22"—24".....	£4.65 £4.90
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38"—40".....	£2.90
Socks—(Home and Away)—Small.....	£1.10 £1.45
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Sizes—26".....	£10.80
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CLUB SCENE

WELCOME AND THANK YOU

Former *Villa Times* Editor, Graham Clark, is joining Aston Villa's Commercial department and will be involved in all aspects of the work in this department. Eventually, Graham will be working on several ideas which have been on our list of 'things to do'.

The *Villa Times* has ceased publication because of a decision, for financial reasons, which was taken by the publishers, The Tamworth Herald. Any queries regarding the *Times*—advertising and subscriptions etc.—should be addressed to the Tamworth Herald.

Readers of the *Times* are invited to take out a subscription to the *Villa News and Record*. Details of rates can be obtained by writing to: Eric Woodward, Commercial Manager, A.V.F.C., Villa Park, Birmingham B6 6HE.

Keith Dale is leaving the Aston Villa Development Association to take up another appointment. We would like to thank him most sincerely for his efforts on behalf of the Association and the Football Club. We wish him every success, and he will always be welcome at Villa Park.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Phil Hunt, a valued member of the backroom team until his retirement ten years ago, is celebrating his 80th birthday today. His family, his friends and all at Villa Park would like to wish him well. Phil was with Villa for 38 years and now lives in Droitwich.

GOALKEEPER SCORES!

Youth team goalkeeper Mark Kendall achieved the unusual distinction of scoring from a clearance when playing for a Villa 'Under-19' side against the England Youth XI. "The ball bounced once and went over the 'keeper's head," explained Youth Coach Keith Leonard.

The match was played on the University of Aston ground in Great Barr. Villa, fielding two 'over age' players in Gary Shelton and Dave Cunningham, won 3-2 after building up a three goal lead at one stage with Mark Kendall's spectacular long shot and two goals from Gary Williams.

The England side included Andy Ritchie, who has recently been among the goals in Manchester United's first team, and Mark Dennis, who has held down a regular place in Birmingham City's defence.

Please Note!

The FA Cup-tie at Nottingham Forest next Saturday will kick-off at 3.15pm. This is to avoid a direct clash with the rival game at Notts County.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST v ASTON VILLA

The FA Challenge Cup — Third Round

at Nottingham, Saturday 6th January, 1979 — Kick-off: 3.15pm

While we anticipate that by the time of this programme all reserved seats for the match will have been sold, Villa supporters are reminded that the game will **not** be all-ticket, and that admission to the standing terraces will be by payment at the turnstiles on the afternoon of the match. Villa supporters should make their way by the river to the Riverside Section of the East Stand, where our enclosures are situated.

Please note that Notts County are also at home that afternoon, and are kicking-off at 2.30pm. Please allow a little extra time to get to our match bearing in mind the County traffic.

If the match at Nottingham is drawn, the Replay will be at Villa Park on Wednesday 10th January, kick-off 7.30pm.

That game will also **not** be all-ticket, and admission to the standing terraces will be by payment at the turnstiles on the evening of the match. The whole of the Witton standing enclosure will be allocated to Nottingham Forest, and Villa supporters are asked on that occasion to use the Holte End only for standing.

Prices of admission will be . . . Reserved seats: £2.50 and £1.50 . . . Standing: £1.00

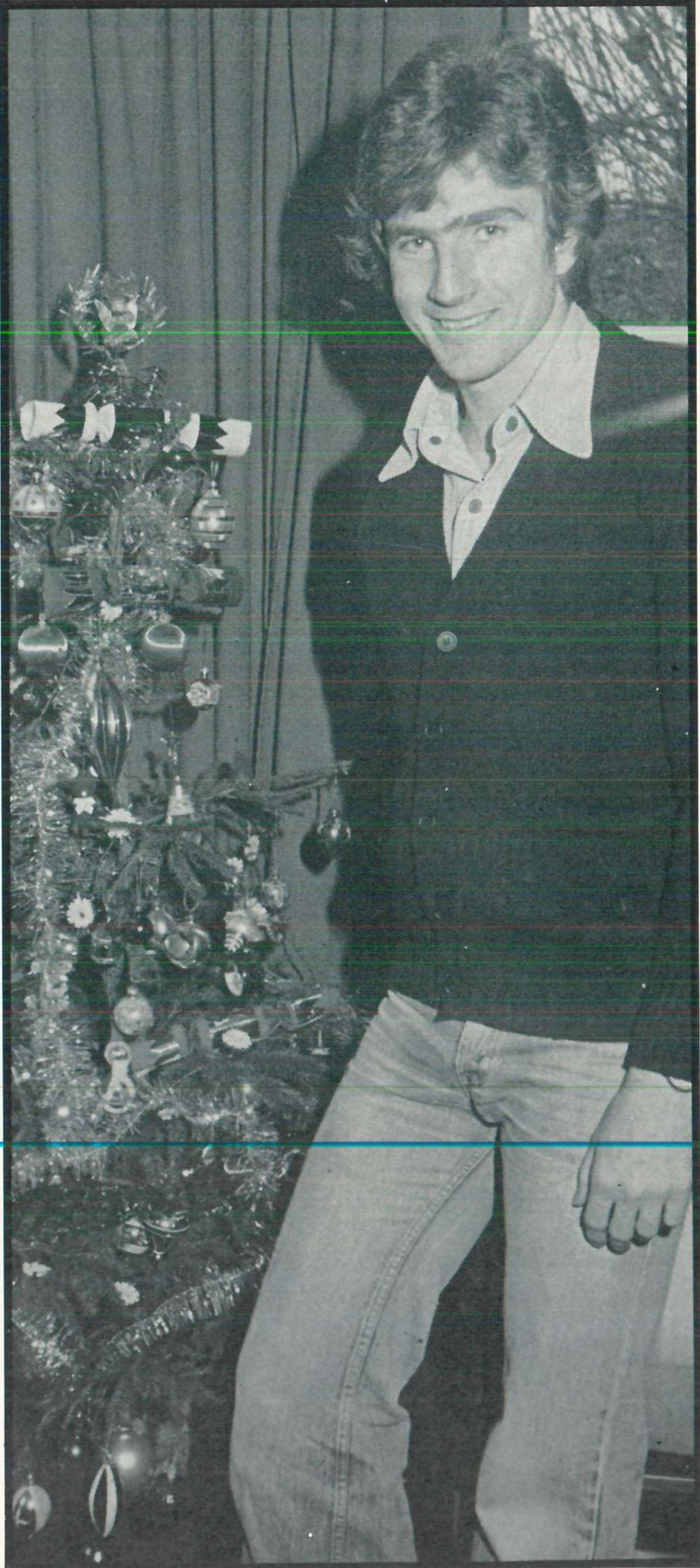
Aston Villa Seating Season Ticket Holders are again reminded that in the event of a Replay they already have their Replay tickets in their Season Ticket Books, and have paid for them. They should treat the match in the normal way, bringing their Season Ticket Books with them and surrendering Voucher 'D' from the Cup section at the rear of the book at their usual turnstiles on the night of the match before occupying their usual seats.

If Nottingham Forest take their full allocation of reserved seats, there will be relatively few available for general sale. Those available will be on sale from the Ticket Office on Sunday 7th January, from 10.00am to 12.30pm, and subsequently while still available from Monday morning onwards from 9.15am to 5.00pm.

Aston Villa Standing Season Ticket Holders are again reminded that their Tickets are **not** valid for FA Cup matches, and they should pay for admission to stand at the Holte End through the Standing Season Ticket Holders turnstiles on the night of the match.

JOE SIGNS ON...

Joe Ward, our new Scottish striker from Clyde, joined the Villa staff last week after completing a week's notice with a business firm in Glasgow. Joe, who played as a part-time professional for Clyde, has been a consistent scorer over the last two years and enjoyed a particularly successful spell on the run-in to Clyde's triumph in the Scottish Second Division Championship last Spring. He netted 13 times in the final 15 games and scored a hat-trick against Meadowbank.



TWENTY QUESTIONS (From Page Two) . . .
1—West Germany 'B' 1, England 'B' 2 in Augsburg. 2—Brian Little. 3—Tony Brown (WBA). 4—Steve Phillips (Brendford). 5—Harlepool, York, Rochdale. 6—Crystal Palace. 7—Crystal Palace 1, Villa 0. 8—Swansea. 9—Mario Kempes. 10—Rob Rensenbrink. 11—Barcelona. 12—Watford. 13—Ian Greaves (Bolton). 14—Borussia Moenchengladbach. 15—Blyth Spartans. 16—Ken McNught and John Deehan scored the goals in the home match against Barcelona. 17—Wrexham. 18—Steve Coppell. 19—Austria. 20—Allan Evans.

TEAMS

ASTON VILLA Claret & Blue Shirts, White Shorts

- 1 JIMMY RIMMER
- 2 JOHN GIDMAN
- 3 GARY WILLIAMS
- 4 ALLAN EVANS
- 5 KEN McNAUGHT
- 6 DENNIS MORTIMER
- 7 TOMMY CRAIG
- 8 KEN SWAIN
- 9 JOHN DEEHAN
- 10 GORDON COWANS
- 11 JOHN GREGORY
- 12

BOLTON WAND. White Shirts, Navy Blue Shorts

- 1 JIM McDONAGH
- 2 PETER NICHOLSON
- 3 TONY DUNNE
- 4 ROY GREAVES
- 5 PAUL JONES
- 6 MIKE WALSH
- 7 WILLIE MORGAN
- 8 PETER REID
- 9 ALAN GOWLING
- 10 FRANK WORTHINGTON
- 11 NEIL McNAB
- 12

SCORES

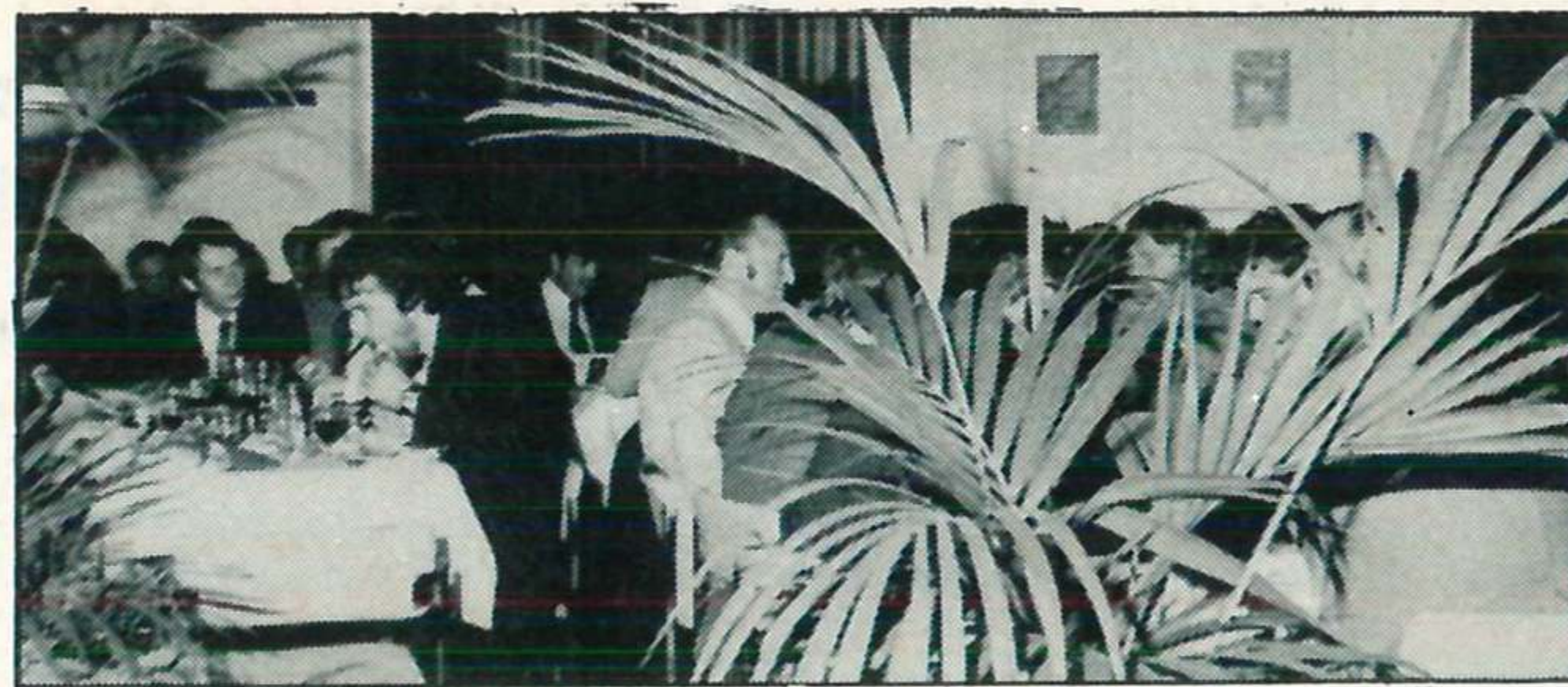
A	Arsenal Birmingham City	L	Brighton Newcastle Utd
B	Bristol City Manchester City	N	Burnley Cardiff City
C	Everton Tottenham H.	P	Crystal Palace Orient
D	Ipswich Town Chelsea	S	Fulham Luton Town
E	Manchester Utd W. B. Albion	T	Preston Bristol Rovers
F	Middlesbrough Derby County	V	Stoke City Notts County
G	Nottingham F. Norwich City	W	Sunderland Wrexham
H	QPR Leeds United	X	West Ham United Blackburn Rovers
J	Southampton Liverpool	Y	Oxford United Walsall
K	Wolves Coventry City	Z	Sheff. Wed. Res. A. Villa Res.

OFFICIALS REFEREE: K. G. SALMON, Barnet

Ken Salmon, a Road Safety Officer, progressed through the Isthmian League. Top appointments as a linesman include . . . England v Wales Amateur (1970), League Cup semi-final (1974), and a UEFA Cup match in Sweden (1975).

LINESMEN: R. F. HARRIS, Oxford—(Red Flag)
J. F. PARDOE, Kidderminster—(Yellow Flag)

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TODAY'S MATCH BALL DONOR . . .

ALAN WEBB

BOOKMAKER, TAMWORTH

Wishes all Aston Villa supporters a Prosperous New Year

VILLA VOUCHERS ARE VALUABLE...
SAVE THEM!



WELCOME . . . We are hosts today, in the Executive Box, to
**Mr David Roberts, his family
and friends**